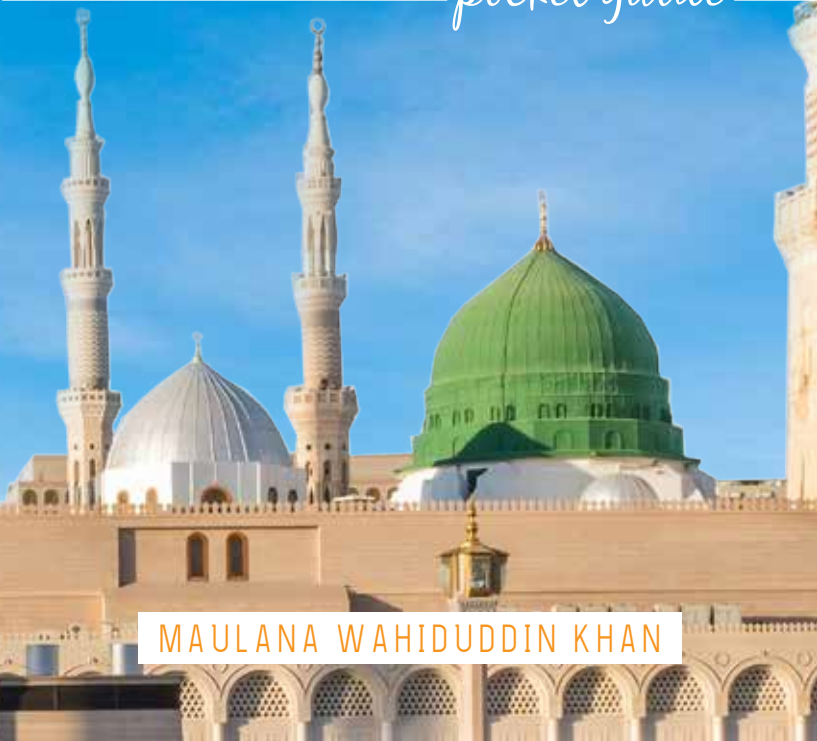
AN ILLUSTRATED HANDBOOK

the prophet MUHAMMAD ﷺ pocket guide



MAULANA WAHIDUDDIN KHAN

the prophet

MUHAMMAD ﷺ

pocket guide

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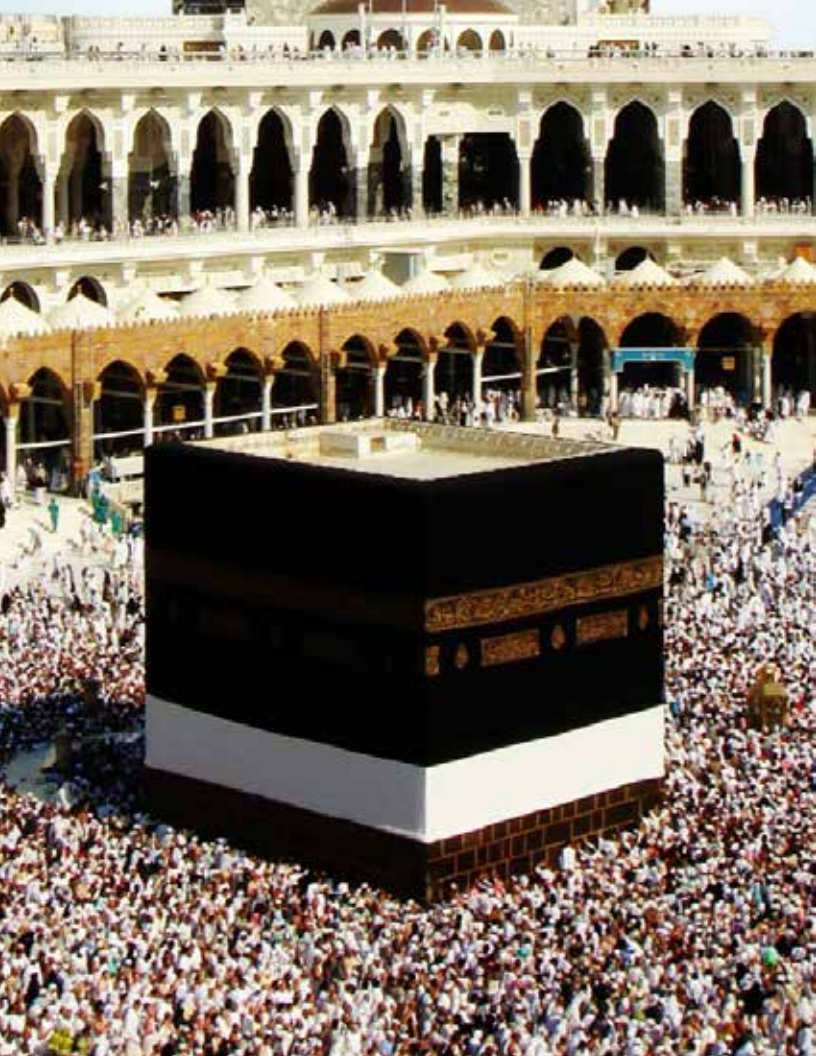


Childhood and Youth

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, was born in Makkah into the tribe of the Quraysh in 570 A.D. He died at the age of 63 in 632 A.D. in Madinah. Makkah was then inhabited mainly by the tribe of the Quraysh. In those times, this tribe enjoyed great prestige all over Arabia and the neighbouring countries, for Makkah was a flourishing trade and religious centre.

Muhammad was still in his mother's womb when his father, Abdullah, died. Soon after his birth, Aminah, his mother, sent the baby to Abdul Muttalib, his grandfather, who was overjoyed to receive him, for he had loved Abdullah, Muhammad's father, very much. The grandfather gave him the name "Muhammad", meaning "the praised one." As was the practice of the Makkan nobility, he was handed over to a wet nurse, Halimah al-Sadiyya, who belonged to the Banu Sa'd tribe. This custom is still practiced among the Makkan aristocracy.

Muhammad remained in the charge of Halimah until the age of five. He learned Arabic in its purest form from her tribe.

After five years of desert life, Muhammad returned to his mother Aminah, who took him to Yathrib (now known as Madinah) to meet her uncles, the Banu al-Najjar. After a month's stay in Yathrib, Aminah set out again for Makkah, but, on the way, she fell ill and died.

The orphan Muhammad was then taken care of by his grandfather Abdul Muttalib, the chief of the Quraysh, who looked after him with great affection. As leader of the Quraysh, he used to sit on a cushion in the Kabah, and whenever Muhammad joined him, he

was allowed to sit on that cushion. Abdul Muttalib died when Muhammad was just eight years old.

Now the guardianship of Muhammad passed to Abu Talib, his uncle, who was a merchant. Once when Abu Talib was preparing to go to Syria on a trading journey, Muhammad expressed a keen desire to accompany him. Though he was rather young to undertake such a difficult journey, Abu Talib was so full of affection for him that he could not refuse, and agreed to take him along.

When they reached Syria, their trade caravan halted at the city of Busra. There they met a Christian monk by the name of Bahirah who was living there in a monastery. He had read in the ancient books about the emergence of an Arab prophet, and immediately recognised in Muhammad the signs of prophethood.

The monk invited the whole caravan to his monastery and asked Abu Talib, "In what way are you related to this child?" He said, "He is my son." Bahirah said, "This cannot be. His father should not be alive." Then Abu

He was called Al-Amin (trustworthy) and As-Sadiq (truthful) by his compatriots.

Talib informed him that his father was deceased. Bahirah advised him to return with his nephew immediately and to protect him from enemies. He said, "By God, if he is recognised, he will surely be harmed."

By the time Muhammad reached adulthood, he was well-known in Makkah for his good morals, gentle disposition and sincerity. He was called *Al-Amin* (trustworthy) and *As-Sadiq* (truthful) by his compatriots.

When Muhammad was twenty-five, a rich 40-year old widow, Khadijah, entrusted him with the management of her business. She used to employ men to engage in trading on her behalf, and rewarded them with a share of the profits. Muhammad was so honest in all his dealings that she was deeply impressed by his virtues and expressed her desire to marry him. After consultations with his uncle, Muhammad accepted the proposal of marriage.

Revelations Begin

With the passing of years Muhammad became less and less interested in business and devoted more and more of his time to the search for truth by means of reflection and meditation. He would often go to mount Hira, three miles from Makkah, where he stayed in the cave there lost in thoughts for hours. He sought answers to the mysteries of life. What is man's true role in life? What does the Lord require of us, as His servants? From where does man come and where will he go after death? This phase of Muhammad's life is referred to in the Quran in this verse.

"Did He not find you wandering and give you guidance?" (Al-Duha, 93:7).

At the age of 40, the angel of the Lord appeared before him bringing the first message from God.

The angel said to him "Read."

The Prophet replied, "I do not know how to read."

Then Muhammad felt that his body was being squeezed hard. Then the angel released him and repeated the same command. Again Muhammad replied that he did not know how to read. Then the angel again squeezed him and then released him for the third time and said: "Read!"

Then the angel Jibril revealed to him the chapter Al-Alaq.

"Read! In the name of your Lord, who created: created man from a clot (of blood); Read! Your Lord is the Most Bountiful One who taught by the pen, taught man what he did not know." (Al-Alaq, 96:1-5)

The Prophet trembled in fear at what he had seen and heard in the cave. The revelation had been a totally new experience for him. Immediately after the disappearance of the angel, he set off home.

On arrival, the Prophet asked Khadijah to wrap him in blankets. He was shivering with high fever. When he calmed down, he related the whole incident to her.

Khadijah, being very kind and understanding, tried her best to reassure him.

Khadijah then suggested that they should go and consult her cousin Waraqa ibn Nawfal, who had become a Christian hermit.

"Did He not find you wandering and
give you guidance?"
(Al-Duha, 93:7)

Waraqa heard the whole account from Muhammad and said:

"I am sure that the angel who descended on Moses has descended on you. You will be abused, and you will be pursued. I wish I could be alive to give you my support when your people will turn you out."

"Will they turn me out?" The Prophet found this difficult to believe. Waraqa replied that people have always turned against those who are recipients of God's messages.

The Quran—The Word of God

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ faced many people in his lifetime who did not believe in him. They challenged him to work a miracle just as Jesus had done in order to prove that God had really sent him as His messenger. This he did not do. He retorted that it was quite unnecessary, as the Quran itself was the supreme miracle. If anyone

doubted it, let them try to compose ten surahs that would bear comparison with it.

"If you are truthful, produce ten invented chapters like it, and call on whom you can besides God, to help you." (Hud, 11:13).

In the pre-Islamic era, the Arabs excelled at poetry and tried to match the Quran. They were unable to do so. The matchless literary quality of the Quran is one of the proofs that it is the word of God.

He also pointed out that there were obvious signs of God everywhere—in the beauty of nature, in life-giving water, in the growth of crops and in the miracle of birth. The entire universe, in fact, was proof of His existence as the Creator and Sustainer.

There were two main ways in which the Quran came to The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Sometimes the angel Jibril would reveal the verses of the Quran as one man to another. This way it was easy. But, at other times, it was like the ringing of a bell piercing his heart and tearing him apart. This method was very hard and painful. The revelation of the Quran started when the Prophet was 40 years old and continued intermittently throughout his life. The last revelation of the Quran came only a few months before his death, when the Prophet was 63 years of age.

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ declared that each prophet was sent with miracles and that the Quran was one of the Prophet's miracles.

The First Believers

The Prophet's wife, Khadijah, was the first convert to Islam. When the news of Muhammad's prophethood reached his freed slave, Zayd bin Haritha, who was 30 years of age, and his cousin Ali, who was about eleven, both declared their faith in Islam. Abu Bakr, the

Prophet's friend from childhood, also professed his faith.

This small group of the faithful were the first believers of Islam. In the first stage, the Prophet was asked to spread the message of Islam quietly to avoid arousing any hostility. Abu Bakr, being an influential merchant, was able to bring some of his friends, also rich merchants, into the fold of Islam. But the majority of the conversions took place among the weak and the poor.

In the second stage, the Prophet received the command from God to spread the message publicly, but first to his own kin.

For this purpose, he invited his family members to a meal at his house. It was Ali who managed the food. After they had taken their meal, the Prophet put his message before them: that God had made him His messenger and that they should extend their cooperation to him so that he could fulfil this responsibility of prophethood.

No one among the elders was ready to help the Prophet. Only Ali, who was a child of 10-12 years, stood up and said: "I take your responsibility, O Messenger of God!" On hearing Ali's response, the Prophet smiled and said, "You O Ali, you O Ali!"

The First Public Call to Islam

According to Arab custom, people used to ascend a hill when they had to announce some important news. So the Prophet, with his all-important tidings, climbed up on a hillock called Safa, situated near the Kabah. He then called out to the people, who all gathered around him. Then he addressed them thus: "If I tell you that a big army is hiding behind that mountain and is ready to attack you, will you believe me?" They all chorused, "Of course, we will, for we trust you. We know you always tell the truth." Then the Prophet said:

"God has commanded me to warn you, my kinsmen, that you should worship none but the one and only God. If you fail to do so, you will invite God's wrath. And I will not be able to do anything to help you, even though you are my kinsmen."

Abu Lahab, the Prophet's uncle, became very angry and said:

"Woe to you on this day! Did you assemble us for this?"

Some remarked that he had gone mad. Soon they all dispersed without caring to give any thought to the words of the Prophet.

Opposition and Hardships

There was one main reason for the Quraysh to reject the Prophet. Makkah was a centre of pilgrimage because of the Kabah, which housed 360 idols of the neighbouring tribes and nations. Since Islam believed in only one God, the Quraysh feared that once the concept of one God became popular, the tribes would stop visiting the Kabah to pay homage to the idols. This would deprive them of the respect they commanded as guardians of the Kabah. People in great numbers from the neighbouring tribes used to visit Makkah all the year round to make offerings to the idols. This brought prosperity to Makkah, for trade flourished side by side with the pilgrimage. Makkah being a desert, no

agriculture or economic resources existed there. The Kabah was their only asset. But, not all of the Makkans were hostile. There were people who gave serious thought to the message of the Quran and gradually began to accept Islam. In that period, about 200 people from Makkah as well as the neighbouring settlements entered the fold of Islam.

The Quraysh, who enjoyed the Makkan leadership, considered the teachings of the new religion an insult to the religion of their forefathers. In Islam they saw a danger to their own leadership. Such leaders as Abu Jahl, Abu Lahab were the most hostile to the Prophet.

The chiefs of different clans gathered to discuss this matter. They all felt that if Abu Talib did not come in their way, they would have no difficulty in finding a solution to this problem. So they all came to Abu Talib to tell him to stop Muhammad ﷺ from spreading his message.

They warned him, "Tell Muhammad ﷺ to stop spreading his message, or you will abandon him. If you fail to do so, you should be ready to suffer for the deeds of your nephew."

Abu Talib, an old man, felt that he would not be able to resist their wrath. So he told Muhammad ﷺ what the Quraysh chiefs had said to him and then added, "My dearest nephew, look to your own safety, and to the safety of your uncle, and do not cause me to carry a burden I cannot bear."

For a while the Prophet stood motionless. On the one hand, there was his old uncle weakened by the people's opposition, and on the other hand, there was the responsibility to proclaim the truth till his last breath. So he decided to discharge his duty whatever the cost. In a firm and calm voice, and with tears in his eyes, he said:

"O Uncle! By God Almighty, I swear that even if they were to place the sun on my right hand and the moon on

my left hand, I would not give up my mission. I must go on carrying it out till I die."

Abu Talib, touched by the sincerity and force of the words uttered by his nephew, remained motionless for a while. Then he turned to the Prophet and said:

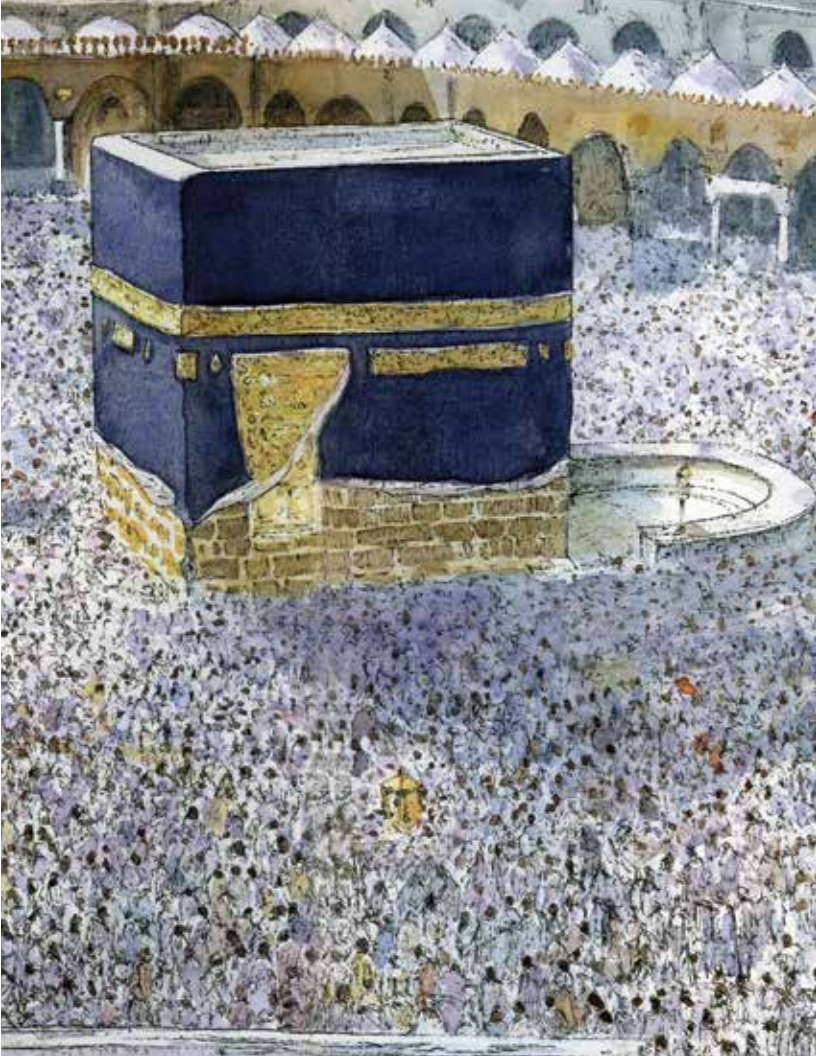
"My nephew, go your way. Do your duty. Let my people turn against me. I am with you. No one shall harm you as long as I live."

Opposition Intensified

When the Quraysh saw that the pressure on Abu Talib had failed, they decided to make life unbearable for the Prophet and his followers. Slaves, the weakest sections of society, were the worst sufferers. Their masters beat them brutally and some of them were beaten to death. But they suffered all this patiently. Abu Bakr spent much of his wealth on freeing these slaves.

Even the wealthy Muslims were not spared. They were also persecuted. Their own relatives turned against them.

The Makkans did all that they could to turn people away from the Prophet. But, in spite of all their efforts, Islam continued to spread. Some of the powerful men of Makkah accepted Islam. Hamzah, the Prophet's uncle,



The Qurayash were more enraged than before. They made life so difficult for the Muslims that a number of them migrated to Abyssinia (Ethiopia), a nearby country, with the Prophet's permission.

Umar ibn Al-Khattab, who was famous for his bravery, and Abu Dharr Ghifari were among them.

The Makkan chiefs were more enraged than before. They made life so difficult for the Muslims that a number of them migrated to Abyssinia (Ethiopia), a nearby country, with the Prophet's permission. At first fifteen men and women migrated to Abyssinia. Slowly, the number reached 83.

This safe haven of the Muslims made the Makkans all the more angry. They sent two of their men to Negus, the king of Abyssinia. These men brought him precious gifts and requested him to turn these 'ignoble' people out of his land as they had forsaken their forefather's religion to follow a new religion. Negus sent for the Muslims and asked them to explain their case. Thereupon Jafar, son of Abu Talib, briefly explained to him the teachings of Islam and recited some portions from the Quran from the chapter called 'Mary'. Negus was very impressed and said:

"Go forth into my kingdom; I shall not extradite you at all."

Then he turned to the Makkans and said:

"Go away, I cannot give up these people. They are following the true faith."

Social Boycott

With the passage of time, the Makkan chiefs became more and more bitter. They felt that it was the Prophet Muhammad's clan, the Banu Hashim, headed by Abu Talib, that was responsible for all this misery and that if they had given up the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, all his activities could have been stopped without delay. They made it known to the Banu Hashim that if they did not surrender Muhammad to them, they would have to suffer the consequences.

The tribes of Makkah entered into an agreement. They agreed to cut off all dealings with the Banu Hashim. No one was to sell anything to them. The agreement was signed and hung up in the sacred Kabah. This was the seventh year of the prophethood.

This period of boycott was one of great hardship for the Banu Hashim and the Muslims. While this ban was

in force, Abu Talib, the chief of the Banu Hashim, had to take refuge in a narrow valley, which came to be known as Abu Talib's Pass. For three years, the Prophet and all his relatives lived in this valley. Many of the Muslims joined them. Since all supplies to the valley were cut off, the Banu Hashim had to live on the leaves and roots of trees.

Finally, certain kind-hearted Makkan leaders took pity on the Banu Hashim. The agreement was annuled and the Banu Hashim could come back to their homes. But soon after this, Abu Talib, the Prophet's uncle, died. His health had deteriorated during the three years of hardship. Although Abu Talib had not accepted Islam, as head of his clan he had protected the Prophet from his opponents.

After his death, Abu Lahab, another uncle of the Prophet, became head of the Banu Hashim. He was the most bitter enemy of Islam and the Muslims. He made it clear to the Quraysh that the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ no longer enjoyed his clan's protection. In those days, it was impossible for an individual to survive without the protection of his clan.

Khadijah, the faithful wife of the Prophet, also died soon after the ban was lifted. Both these deaths took place in the 10th year of the prophethood. The Prophet

بسم الله الرحمن

مثل الذين ينفقون أموالهم

حبة أنبتت سبع سنابل في كل

يضاعف لمن يشاء

واسع عليم

Muhammad ﷺ said, "Mary, the daughter of 'Imran, was the best among the women (of the world of her time) and Khadijah is the best amongst the women (of this nation)."

The loss of Abu Talib and Khadijah saddened the Prophet, for they had been great sources of strength to him. It was their deaths that made the enemy bold enough to persecute him. One day when the Prophet was praying in the Kabah, Abu Jahl put a piece of cloth round his neck and twisted it hard. He would have strangled the Prophet had not Abu Bakr rushed to his help in time.

The Journey to Ta'if

Day by day, the situation worsened. So the Prophet decided to go to Ta'if, a neighbouring town, 40 miles from Makkah to spread the teachings of Islam. He spoke to the leaders of the town and invited them to accept Islam. They paid no heed to his message. They were such evil people that they did not stop at that. When the Prophet was leaving the town in a dejected state, he was chased by street urchins instigated by these chiefs. They abused him and threw stones at him as he walked out of town. They continued to pelt him with stones until

he escaped under cover of the darkness of the night. He stopped on the way in an orchard to rest. He was badly hurt, bleeding profusely. Yet he only prayed for the guidance of his assailants. He did not curse them. In all humility he addressed God in these words:

"Oh, my God! To You I complain of the feebleness of my strength, of my lack of resources and of my being unimportant in the eyes of people. Oh, Most Merciful of all those capable of showing mercy! You are the Lord of the weak, and You are my own Lord. To whom do You entrust me; to an unsympathetic folk who would sullenly frown at me, or to an alien to whom You have given control over my affairs? Not in the least do I care for anything except that I may have Your protection for myself. I seek shelter in Your light — The light that illuminates the Heavens and dispels all sorts of darkness, and which controls all affairs in this world as well as in the Hereafter. May it never be that I should incur Your wrath, or that You should be displeased with me. I must remove the cause of Your displeasure until You are pleased. There is no strength nor power but through You."

Aishah once asked the Prophet "Have you ever experienced a day harder than the day of the battle of Uhud?" He replied, "The hardest treatment I met from

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them was on the Day of 'Aqabah when I went to Ibn 'Abd Yalil bin 'Abd Kulal (who was one of the chiefs of Ta'if) with the purpose of inviting him to Islam, but he made no response (to my call)."

An Extraordinary Journey

In the tenth year of prophethood the angel Jibril came to take the Prophet on the miraculous journey to the heavens known as Mi'raj. They first went from Makkah to Jerusalem, the Prophet riding on a winged horse. At Jerusalem, the Prophet said his prayers in the Temple of David, where all other prophets joined him in prayer. Then he ascended to the heavens still accompanied by the angel Jibril. The Prophet ascended up the seven heavens, one by one. He met prophets in each heaven. He met Adam, the forefather of man, in the first heaven. John, son of Zacharia and Jesus in the second heaven, Joseph in the third, Idris in the fourth. Aaron

in the fifth and Moses in the sixth. The Prophet Moses started crying when he saw the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. When asked the reason, the Prophet Moses said he was weeping as the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ would be able to lead more of his people to Paradise than he himself had done. God granted an audience to His messenger. It was on this blessed occasion that the Prophet received God's commandments including the prayer to be said five times daily. Originally, fifty daily prayers had been ordained, but Moses asked him to return and ask for a reduction. First the prayers were reduced to 10 and then when the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ went back for a further reduction, the number was reduced to five. The Prophet then came back home.

The Prophet was amazed to find the spot where he had lain was still warm, and the cup he had tipped over was still emptying. This incredible experience had taken place in less than a moment!

The next morning, the Prophet told the Quraysh what had happened. They did not believe him. Many of the companions were amazed and wanted the Prophet to explain how such a thing could happen. But the Prophet's description of Jerusalem, and the caravans he had seen on the way back to Makkah, convinced them he was telling the truth.

The Migration to Madinah

The Prophet used to convey the message of Islam to the people coming from outside Makkah. People from Yathrib (renamed as Madinatun-Nabi, the Prophet's city) had started to accept Islam.

In the thirteenth year of Prophethood, seventy two Muslims from Yathrib came for the Hajj. On behalf of their people they invited the Prophet to make Yathrib his home. These men from Yathrib pledged to protect the Prophet from his enemies. For all this sacrifice they only wanted one assurance from the Prophet: that when the Prophet gained power, he would not leave them and return to Makkah. The Prophet replied:

"You have that assurance. I am yours and you are mine."

Now the Muslims began to emigrate to Yathrib in large numbers to escape persecution at the hands of the Quraysh. Only the Prophet, Abu Bakr and a few Muslims were left in Makkah.

This infuriated the Quraysh, for Islam was now strengthening its root in Yathrib. There was nothing more dangerous than that. So they resolved to remove the danger once and for all. They said:

"Kill Muhammad and Islam will die with him."

The young men with whom the Quraysh planned to carry out the assassination, duly collected in that fateful night. But before they could put their plan into action, God, having conceived of a different plan for the

Prophet, commanded him to leave for Madinah. And who can overrule God's plan? Accordingly, the Porphet — after giving Ali all the people's deposits to be returned to them made Ali lie down in his bed, while he himself left the house at midnight.

Before dawn, the Prophet, accompanied by Abu Bakr, left Makkah and, about five miles from the city the two men took shelter in a cave called Thawr.

When the Makkans learnt of the Prophet's escape, they were mad with rage. They offered a reward of a hundred camels to anyone who captured The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and a number of horsemen immediately raced out into the desert. Some of them even managed to reach the very mouth of the cave of Thawr. Abu Bakr was stricken with fear lest they harm the Prophet. But the Prophet reassured him, saying:

"Fear not. We are not two only in this cave. There is a third—God."

The Prophet and Abu Bakr lay hidden in this cave for three days and three nights. On the fourth day they came out and continued the journey. Their guide for this dangerous journey was Abdullah ibn al Uraiqit, a non-Muslim, who was a friend of Abu Bakr.

Love for Humanity

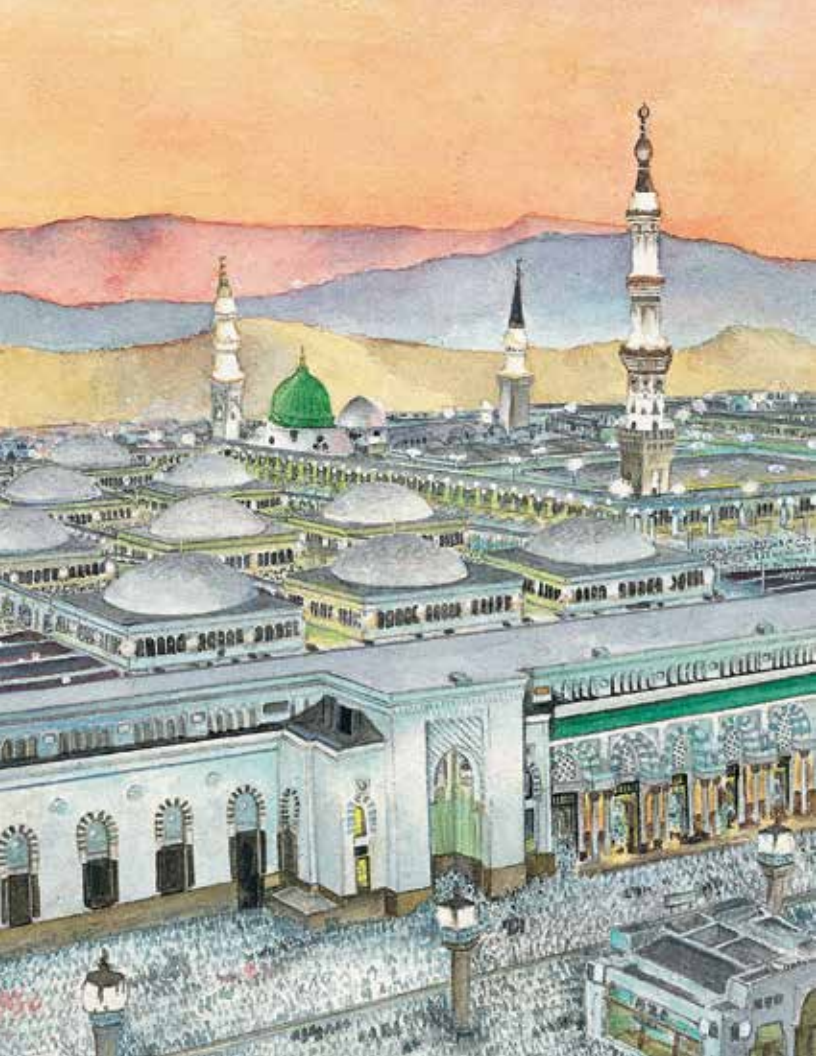
The first problem faced by the Prophet was that of the Makkan refugees. They had neither homes nor money. Most of them had been well-to-do in Makkah, but they had left everything behind them. So the first important thing for the Prophet to do was to settle them in their new surroundings.

The solution to this problem was found in the concept of brotherhood in Islam. The Prophet collected the Muslims and suggested that one Ansar (Madinan Muslim) and one Muhajir (Makkan Muslim) should become linked together as two brothers.

The Muslims of Madinah immediately accepted the suggestion of the Prophet. Each Ansar took one Makkan Muslim as his brother. This bond between the two became even stronger than a blood relationship. The Ansar gave his Makkan brother half of everything he possessed—house, land, money and other belongings.

The Prophet gave his first sermon after migration to Madinah on the first Friday at the Mosque of Jumu'a while he was travelling from Quba to Madinah. He said:

1. Worship Almighty God.
2. You should be truthful in your life.
3. Love everyone in your society.



4. Fulfill the promises and commitments you make.
5. Differentiate between the lawful and the unlawful in your life.
6. Behave in a good manner with others.

The Prophet, after being tortured and forced by the Makkans to migrate, did not mention any kind of revenge but instead talked about spreading love, peace and humanity among the people of Madinah.

The Prophet's Mosque

The next most important task for the Prophet was to build a mosque. This mosque was built on the land he had bought from two orphans. It had mud walls and a roof of palm leaves. The Prophet himself contributed to building the mosque by carrying bricks and stones while reciting the following verses:

"Oh God! no bliss is there but that of the Hereafter, I beseech You to forgive the Emigrants and the Helpers."

The *qiblah* (the direction in which Muslims turn their faces in prayer), was constructed to face Jerusalem. It was later changed by divine command to Makkah, the home of the Kabah.

Huts were built adjacent to the mosque for the Prophet's family. The mosque was not only a place for

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prayer, it was also the administrative headquarters where consultations were held and decisions taken.

A platform with a thatched roof was built in one corner of the mosque. Poor people who had no home or family lived here. They spent their time in worship and prayer. They were fed by those Muslims who could afford to do so. They also sometimes earned their living by collecting wood from the jungle and selling it in the market. These people came to be known as Ashabus-Suffa, people of the bench. The number of the Ashabus-Suffa used to vary but as many as seventy in number have been recorded. Abu Hurayrah, a constant attendant of the Prophet, and one of the Ashabus-Suffa, related more hadiths (traditions of the sayings and doings of the Prophet) than any other.

Abu Hurayrah himself narrated how this had become possible. He said that the Muhajir were traders whose occupation kept them busy—buying and selling. The Ansar had orchards of date palms to look after and they

were occupied with that. Abu Hurayrah who, had none of these preoccupations was present when others were not and he had once complained to the Prophet about his forgetfulness. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ asked him to spread out his sheet of cloth, then he recited some *duas* and asked him to fold up the sheet. Abu Hurayrah folded the sheet and pressed it to his chest. He says that he never forgot anything after that day.

Makkan Opposition

The Prophet was a man of peace and reconciliation. He urged his companions to ask God for peace. For the Prophet's main task was the communication of the divine message to the people. And an atmosphere of peace and goodwill was essential to perform this duty. But the Quraysh did not allow him to work in peaceful conditions. When they saw that the Muslims were becoming increasingly stronger, they resolved to wage war and crush them altogether.

Badr

The Quraysh marched to Madinah with a thousand strong army. They camped at Badr, about eighty miles

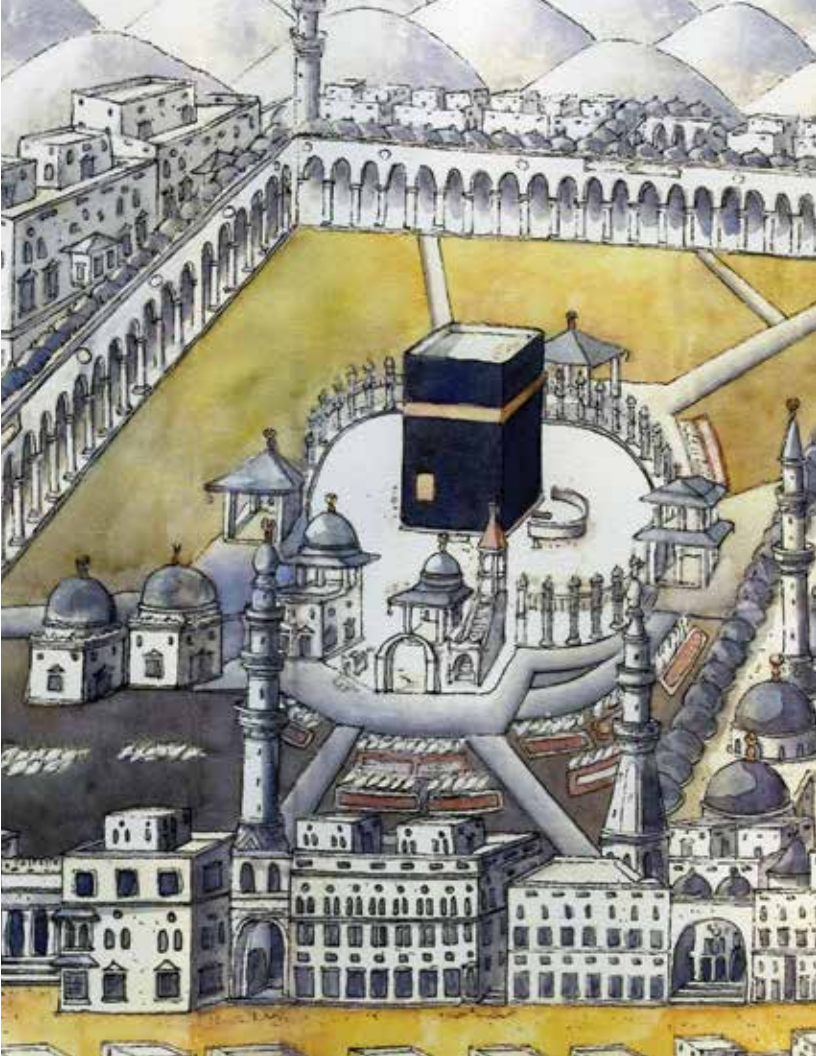
from Madinah. It was the month of Ramadan, two years after the Hijrah. On hearing the news of the enemy camping at Badr, the Prophet marched out of Madinah at the head of an army of 313 Muslims. They had few horses and no armour. The Makkans, on the other hand, were well armed and had 300 horses and 700 camels.

The battle, in which the Muslims were seriously outnumbered, began on Friday, the 17th of Ramadan. The fighting lasted only a few hours, during which the Prophet prayed continuously for divine succour. God then sent angels to help the Muslims who emerged victorious. The Quraysh suffered a total rout.

Uhud

The defeat of Badr, however, did not teach the Quraysh a lesson, but further enraged them. Determined to wipe out the blot of this humiliation, they now began preparations for a second attack, on a much bigger scale. They raised an army of more than 3000 warriors and, mad with revenge, marched to Madinah, led by Abu Sufyan.

The Prophet's men numbered only 700. But with God on their side, the Muslims successfully repulsed



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the attack. The enemy started retreating, leaving behind large quantities of booty. Victory was imminent for the Muslims, but a lapse allowed the Makkans to counter attack and the victory was turned to defeat.

The Quraysh lost 14 men, while the Muslims lost 70. Among the dead was Hamzah, the Prophet's uncle. The Prophet grieved over the loss of this brave soul. With deep sorrow the martyrs were buried and the Muslims came back to Madinah.

The Trench

The enemies and hypocrites contrived to bring together all the opponents of Islam. So they were able to assemble a mighty force of 10,000, with which large army they started marching towards Madinah. The Muslims numbered only 3,000. But the Makkan cavalry were stopped by the trench. However, they had plenty

of provisions and supplies so they decided to lay siege to the city.

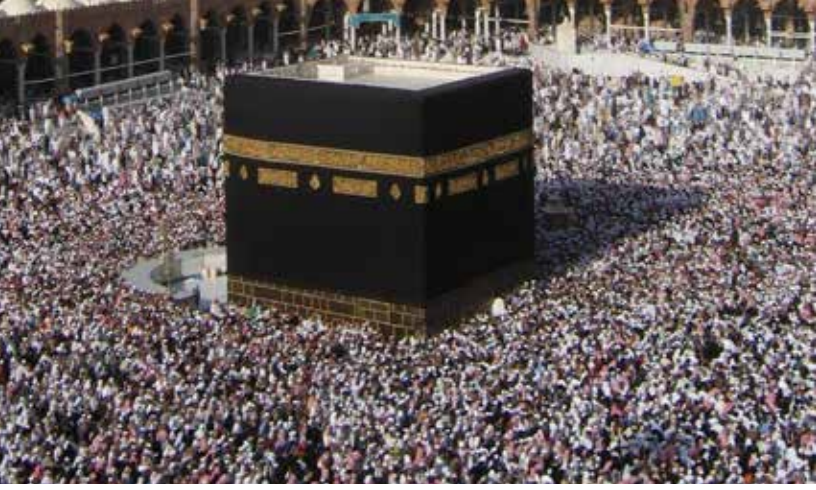
On the 27th day of the siege, a fierce storm hit Madinah. For three days and nights the storm continued, bringing torrential rain.

All the tents were blown away and the provisions became unusable due to the rain. Dissension in the army was now gradually growing. Discouraged, the Quraysh abandoned the siege.

The Peace Treaty and the Spread of Islam

The Peace Treaty

The Prophet felt that war was not the solution. Therefore, he adopted another strategy. Guided by a dream, he left for Makkah to perform Umrah accompanied by 1400 companions. He camped at Hudaybiyyah, a short way from Makkah. It was a completely peaceful march. But the Makkan leaders objected to it. They felt that their prestige was damaged by the fact that the very people who had been expelled by them from Makkah should come to the city again and perform the rights of Umrah openly and in such large numbers.



Now the Prophet halted at Hudaybiyyah and began negotiating for peace with the Makkan leaders. The Quraysh finally agreed to sign a peace treaty specifying that for the next ten years no war would take place between the Muslims and the Makkans. By the terms of this treaty, the Muslims were to go back without visiting the Kabah. They were to come again the following year and stay in Makkah for just three days.

The companions of the Prophet were very upset at the terms of the treaty, it seemed to them that the Makkans had been dominant and they were made out to be subservient. But God declared in the Quran that it was a 'Clear Victory' for the believers. The future events

would show how the Treaty of Hudaybiyyah would pave the way for the spread of Islam across Arabia.

The peace treaty removed the danger of war and people were able to mix freely with any tribe they liked. This gave the non-Muslims an opportunity to have a closer look at Islam. During this period of free interaction, Islam became a subject of general discussion. The call of Islam spread rapidly. The Arabs, impressed by the virtues of Islam began to enter its fold in large numbers. Within the next two years the number of Muslims greatly increased.

Dawah — The Mission of the Prophet

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ at first started to secretly communicate the message of Islam. Members of his immediate family were the first to accept Islam. Abu Bakr Siddiq was the first person outside the family to accept Islam. He in turn called his friends to God and Islam, and some of them, like Uthman and Abdur Rahman bin Auf, accepted Islam.

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ used to visit the homes of the Makkans, calling them towards Islam by reciting the verses of the Quran. Umar said that the Prophet came on many occasions to call him towards Islam.

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ would also address people gathered at the Kabah. The Kabah was the place of pilgrimage and it would have people coming to it from Makkah as well various parts of Arabia. The Prophet would recite to them verses of the Quran, narrating to them the power of God and the powerlessness of the idols they worshipped. He had to face ridicule, anger and opposition. People said that he had become mentally unstable and was a magician. They even tried to bribe him to stop propagating Islam.

The opposition became relentless and even Abu Talib, his uncle, who was his guardian and protector, pleaded with him to abandon Islam. Prophet Muhammad replied that even if the people opposing Islam were to place the sun in his right hand and the moon in his left hand, he would not stop propagating Islam.

The Prophet's Letters to the Kings

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ sent letters to neighbouring kings inviting them and their people to Islam. Among the rulers who were sent letters were Heracleus of the Byzantine Empire; Negus, the ruler of Abyssinia; Maquqas, the king of Egypt and Al Mudhir bin Sawa, the ruler of Bahrain. Some selected companions

were entrusted with the delivery of these letters.

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ had a ring made of silver inscribed with the words "Muhammad ﷺ the messenger of God." He used to seal his letters with this ring.

These letters, short and simply written, gave the basic message of Islam. Here is the letter which the Prophet wrote to Khusru Parvez, the king of Persia:

"In the name of God, the Merciful, the Beneficent. From Muhammad ﷺ, God's messenger, to Khusru, the leader of Persia. Peace be to him who follows right guidance, believes in God and His messenger, and declares that there is no deity save God, the only God, Who has no partners, and that Muhammad is His servant and messenger. I wish to convey to you God's call, for I am God's messenger to all mankind, sent with the task of warning all those who are alive that doom will befall those who reject the truth. If you submit to God, you will be safe. If you refuse, you shall bear the responsibility for the Magians (i.e. your people)."

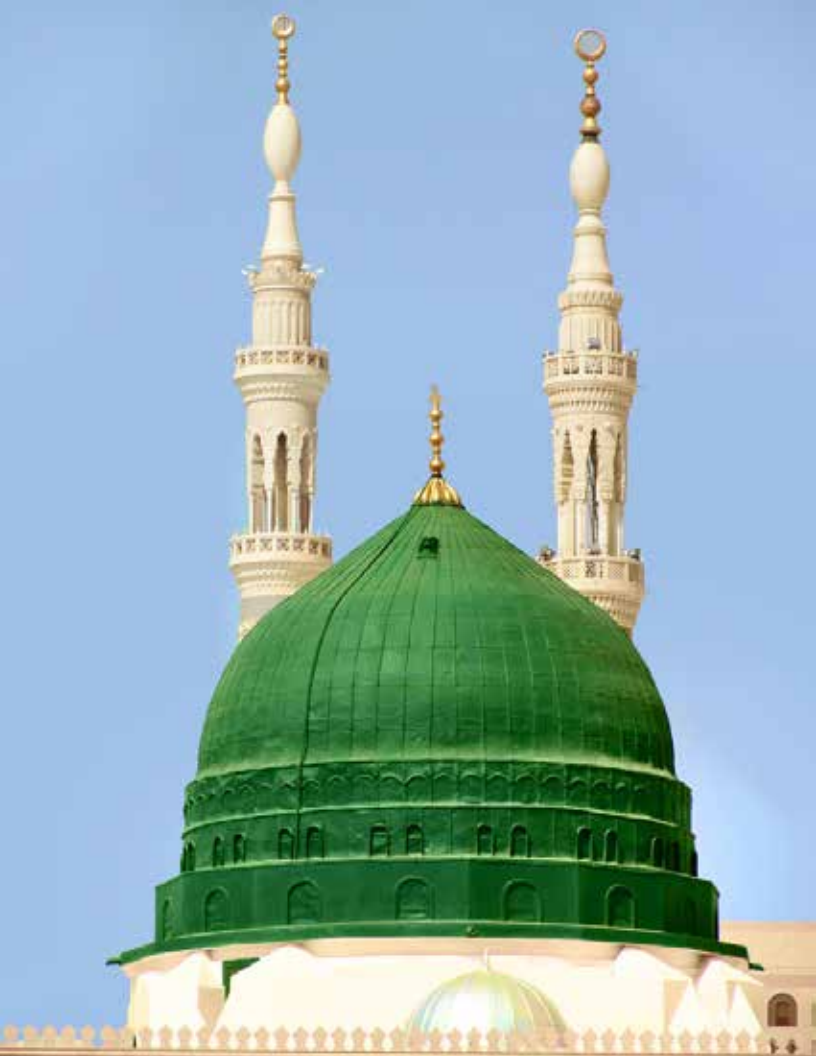
Some of the rulers, like Negus, the ruler of Abyssinia, accepted Islam, while others rejected it, but they accepted the letters graciously and sent presents to the Prophet. Only the Emperor of Iran, Khusru Parvez, tore the Prophet's message apart in his arrogance. He considered it below his dignity to accept such a letter.

When the Prophet received this news, he said: "The Emperor of Persia has himself torn his Kingdom to pieces." This prediction was fulfilled during the rule of Caliph Umar, when Iran came under Muslim rule.

The king of Persia even ordered the governor of Yemen to arrest the Prophet. When his man arrived in Madinah the Prophet surprised him by saying that Khusru Parvez had been killed the previous night. The Prophet had been informed by God: Khusru Parvez had been assassinated by his son.

The Conquest of Makkah

Two years after the signing of the treaty of Hudaybiyyah, the treaty was violated by the Quraysh. The Prophet then announced that the peace agreement had been revoked. Subsequently, on the 10th of Ramadan, he left for Makkah accompanied by 10,000 companions. This march was conducted in complete secrecy. Only when they encamped a few miles from the city did the Makkans come to know of their arrival. The Makkans were completely taken by surprise. Faced with this numerical strength, the Makkans found themselves helpless. Therefore, they conceded their defeat without any resistance. Makkah was thus conquered without any



armed encounter. The Muslims had strict orders to shed no blood. The Makkans were told that they would be safe if they kept indoors or took refuge in the Kabah or in Abu Sufyan's house.

After the conquest of Makkah, the Kabah was purified of all the idols which had been placed in it. Then Bilal, the Negro Companion of the Prophet, went up on to the roof of the Kabah and gave the call to prayer (*adhan*). Then the companions said the thanksgiving prayer, led by the Prophet.

Pardon for All

After the conquest of Makkah, the Makkan leaders were gathered in the compound of the Kabah. They were, without exception, the worst type of criminals. Therefore, even if all of them had been put to death, the punishment would have been fully justified. But the Prophet, being of a noble character, did not take any action against them. He unilaterally declared a general amnesty, saying: "Go, you are all free."

The Makkans could hardly believe their ears. This generous treatment meted out to the fallen foe won all hearts, including those of the most bitter enemies of Islam. After the conquest of their hearts, they had no

choice but to embrace Islam. All the insolent Makkans surrendered and joined the Prophet in his mission as his companions. All opposition just completely vanished.

The acceptance of Islam by the Makkans paved the way for all the tribes of Arab to accept Islam. Representatives of various Arabian tribes came to Madinah to accept Islam at the hand of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

The Farewell Pilgrimage

After having consolidated the power of Islam in Arabia, the Prophet set out to perform *Hajjatul wada'*, his Farewell Pilgrimage. It was the last year of his life. He left Madinah for Makkah accompanied by Madinan Muslims. When the news spread that the Prophet was going to perform the pilgrimage, various tribes living in Arabia began pouring into Makkah.

Therefore when the Prophet of Islam performed his first as well as his last pilgrimage, he was joined by nearly 125,000 Muslims. During this pilgrimage the revelations about the rules of the hajj were given to him. These are followed by all Muslims to this day.

When the Prophet arrived at Mount Arafat, he imparted some teachings to the people present on that

occasion. These are preserved in the form of the "Final Sermon."

During the Sermon of Arafat the last passage of the Quran was revealed:

"Today I have completed your religion for you, and completed My blessings upon you. I have chosen for you Islam as your religion." (*Al Ma'idah*, 5:3)

This proved to be his last visit, that is why it came to be called the "Farewell Pilgrimage". Only three months after his return to Madinah, The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ fell ill and, with the consent of all of his wives, stayed in the house of Aishah. He had fever and headache. He remained ill for about two weeks and breathed his last on 12 Rabiul Awwal, 632 A.D. He continued leading prayers till he became too weak to go to the mosque. But before his death, he said his last prayer in the Prophet's Mosque and made Abu Bakr, his closest companion, the Imam of this prayer.

The Prophet died in the room attached to the Prophet's Mosque. He was buried in the same place. Later when Abu Bakr and Umar died, they were also buried to the right and left side of the Prophet.

The Spread of Islam after the Death of the Prophet

At the time of the Prophet's demise, his companions numbered nearly a lakh and twenty five thousand. However, it is worth noting that if you go to Makkah and Madinah you will find only a small number of graves there. The reason for this is that these companions left Arabia and spread to various countries. The majority of them breathed their last in various Asian and African countries, where their graves still exist.

For example: Umm Haram bint Milhan, a sahabiya, (a Companion of the Prophet) who was married to Ubadah ibn al-Samit Ansari, undertook several trips to foreign countries along with her husband. Her grave is in Cyprus, and is called the grave of the pious woman. The grave of Khalid ibn al-Walid, who was born in Makkah, is in Hims (Syria).

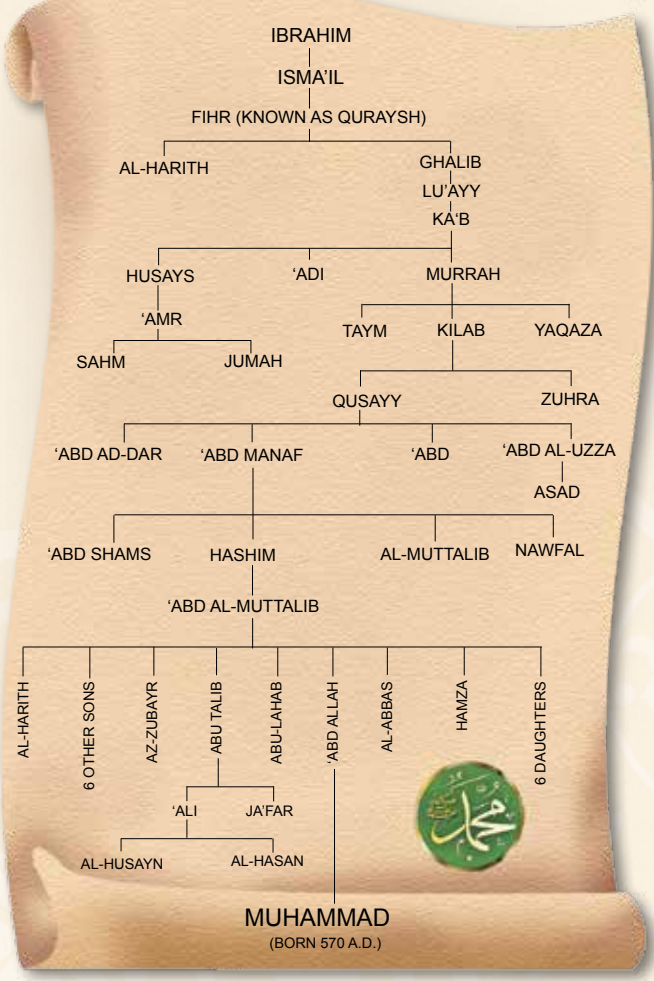
The same is true of the majority of the Companions of the Prophet. Why did this happen? In his sermon on the occasion of the farewell pilgrimage, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ instructed the people present to spread Islam to other lands.

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:

".....All those who listen to me shall pass on my

words to others and those to others again; and it may be that the last ones understand my words better than those who listen to me directly. Be my witness, O God, that I have conveyed Your message to Your people."

It was this injunction of the Prophet that led to the Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) settling in foreign lands. In those countries, they either did business or earned their living by hard work, all the while communicating to their non-Muslim compatriots the message of monotheism which they had received from the Prophet. Every one of them thus became a virtual ambassador of Islam. This resulted in Islam spreading across the globe. Its evidence can still be seen in the inhabited world of that time.


IBRAHIM
ISMA'IL
FIHR (KNOWN AS QURAYSH)
AL-HARITH
GHALIB
LU'AYY
KA'B
HUSAYS
'ADI
MURRAH
'AMR
TAYM
KILAB
YAQAZA
SAHM
JUMAH
QUSAYY
ZUHRA
'ABD AD-DAR
'ABD MANAF
'ABD
'ABD AL-UZZA
ASAD
'ABD SHAMS
HASHIM
AL-MUTTALIB
NAWFAL
'ABD AL-MUTTALIB
AL-HARITH
6 OTHER SONS
AZ-ZUBAYR
ABU TALIB
ABU-LAHAB
'ABD ALLAH
AL-ABBAS
HAMZA
6 DAUGHTERS
'ALI
JA'FAR
AL-HUSAYN
AL-HASAN
MUHAMMAD
(BORN 570 A.D.)

The Prophet and his Family

The Prophet: A Simple Man

Despite his position as leader, The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ never behaved as if he was greater or better than other people. He never made people feel small, unwanted or embarrassed. He urged his followers to behave kindly and humbly, releasing slaves whenever they could and giving in charity, especially to the very poor, orphans and prisoners, without any thought of reward.

The Prophet himself was never greedy. He ate very little and only simple foods. He preferred never to fill his stomach. Sometimes, for days on end, he would eat

nothing but raw food. He slept on a very simple mattress on the floor and had almost nothing in the way of home comforts or decorations. One day Hafsah, his wife, tried to make him more comfortable at night by folding his reed mat double—without telling him—to make it softer for him. That night he slept peacefully, but he overslept and missed the pre-dawn prayers. He was so distressed when he got up that he never slept like that again.

Simple living and contentment were the key teachings in the Prophet's life: "When you see a person who has been given more money and beauty than you, look then to those who have been given less." In so

doing, you will thank God for His blessings, rather than feel deprived.

People used to ask his wife, 'A'ishah, the daughter of his first and most loyal Companion Abu Bakr, how he lived at home. "Like an ordinary man," she would answer. "He would sweep the house, stitch his own clothes, mend his own sandals, water the camels, milk the goats, help the servants at their work, and eat his meals with them; and he would go to fetch what we needed from the market." He seldom had more than one set of clothes, which he washed himself.

He was a home-loving, peace-loving human being. "When you enter a house, ask God to bless it," he would say. He greeted others with the phrase: A*s-salamu alaykum*—which means: "May peace be upon you"—for peace is the most wonderful thing on earth.

The Prophet's Appearance

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, a fair man with a rosy tinge, was of above average height. He was well built and had broad shoulders and a flat stomach. He used to walk briskly and with a firm step.

The Prophet's companions described him as a handsome person with a prominent forehead, large

black eyes with well set teeth and a pleasant smile. He had slightly curly hair and a thick beard.

His companions said that he had a bright friendly face that looked like the full moon. He did not laugh loudly; his laugh was more like a smile that would show his shiny teeth. His cheerfulness and open personality had their effect on everyone.

When the Prophet emigrated from Makkah to Madinah, he passed by the tent of Umm Ma'bad. She witnessed some of his miracles, then swore fealty to him in Islam before he departed. This is her description of the Prophet:

"I saw a man who is handsome, of glowing countenance, and of good proportions, with neither a large stomach nor a small head. He is smart of appearance, with balanced features, deep black eyes, and long eyelashes. His voice is not coarse. He has a long neck, a full rounded beard, and thick eyebrows that meet each other. When he is silent, he is stately and composed, and when he speaks, his appearance is impressive.

"He is the most beautiful and striking man from a distance and the best and most beautiful from close up. He is well spoken, clear in what he says, saying neither too much nor too little, his words flowing forth like a perfect string of pearls."

The Prophet's Family

The Prophet had a large family. He had many wives, each with a separate household. In those days, when men were often killed in battle, the women who were left behind had to be looked after. So taking several wives was like taking helpless refugees into one's home. They were treated kindly and generously. Muslim men were encouraged to look after the widows of friends who had died in battle, give them separate homes, and treat all wives equally in every respect.

The Prophet's wives shared his pious way of life. They made great personal sacrifices, bearing patiently with all kinds of hardship in the path of God. So they became known as the mothers of the faithful. All the Prophet's sons died in infancy. But four daughters borne by Khadijah grew to adulthood, married and bore children. They were Fatimah, Umm Kulthum, Ruqayyah and Zaynab.

Ruqayyah and Umm Kulthum were married to Uthman bin Affan (one after the death of the other). Zaynab was married to Abu al-As. Fatima, the youngest was married to Ali ibn Abi Talib. All his daughters accepted Islam. Ali and Uthman were among the earliest Muslims but Zaynab's husband Abu al-As did not accept

He slept on a very simple mattress on the floor and had almost nothing in the way of home comforts or decorations.

Islam before the Hijrah. He had a lot of respect for the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ but he felt that people would say that he had accepted Islam at the instance of his wife. Abu al-As was taken prisoner at the Battle of Badr and ransomed.

He became a Muslim much later and migrated to Madinah. Here he was re-married to Zaynab whom he had divorced following a promise to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ after Badr.

The marriages of Ruqayyah and Umm Kulthum had previously been performed with two sons of Abu Lahab Utba and Utayba. Before these marriages were consummated, the Prophet had started to invite people to Islam. Then both the sons of Abu Lahab divorced their wives.

Mothers of the Believers

All the wives of The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ are considered to be an excellent example and role model for the Ummah, exemplifying true faith and sincerity. They are still remembered for their piety, simple lifestyle, purity of heart and devotion to worship. They were generous and kind hearted, spending almost every precious thing they possessed in the cause of Allah and hoping for a greater reward from Allah alone. They all were a great source of solace and support to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and underwent many hardships along with the Prophet without any complaint.

Lives of the two wives of the Prophet, namely Khadijah and Aisha were notable for their contribution to Islam.

Khadija

Khadija was the first wife of The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and the first person to accept Islam. At the time of her marriage to Muhammad ﷺ, she was a widow and one of the wealthiest traders in Makkah. She employed the Prophet as her business agent, then, impressed by his honesty and refined personality, she proposed marriage to him.

She was a source of constant support to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, comforting him when he was deeply shaken by the first visit from the angel Jibril. Khadija's wealth was also a great source of support to Islam. Having endured the hardships of the social boycott of

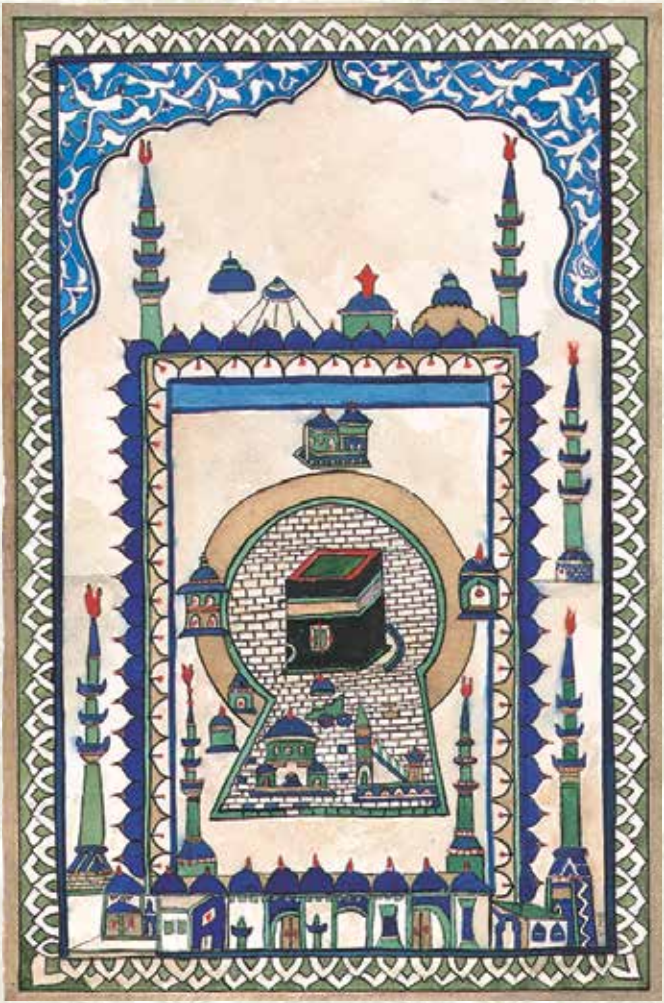
the believers, she was given the glad tidings of a palace of jewels in paradise. She was the only wife of the Prophet whose children reached adulthood. The Prophet used to remember her fondly many years after she had passed away.

ʻA'isha Siddiqa

Aisha was the youngest wife of The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and the daughter of his closest companion, Abu Bakr Siddiq. She was a deeply pious woman who underwent many hardships along with her husband. ʻA'isha narrates that they did not ever have their fill of barley bread for three consecutive days till the day he died.

She was a very intelligent person with an extraordinary memory. She had the opportunity to be very close to the Prophet and would ask him many questions to clarify her understanding of Islam. After the death of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, even senior companions of the Prophet like Umar would come to her for her opinion on difficult issues. She also held regular classes and gave lectures on Islam.

Once some hypocrites spread rumours about her chastity. God then sent revelations recorded in the Quran confirming her innocence.



The Hadith

The Hadith, meaning a 'statement' or 'report', is used as an Islamic term for the records kept of the sayings and doings of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

The Hadith provides the second fundamental source of Islam, giving us a full account of the life of the Prophet, and serving as a commentary of the Quran.

The Quran principally deals with basics. It is the Hadith which gives the details and necessary explanations of the Quranic injunctions. For instance, the Quran says: "Establish the service of worship." But it does not specify how the worship has to be performed. Not even the timings and *rak'a* (units of prayers) are clearly mentioned. We need the traditions to have full information on this.

Even after knowing the details, it may not be possible

to follow the divine injunctions contained in the Quran. For not everything can be properly understood by words alone. Therefore, the Prophet demonstrated before the faithful how prayer was to be performed. He said to the believers: "Look at me, see how I worship, and follow me."

The Quran repeatedly reminds us of the importance of the Hadith, enjoining us to strictly follow the Prophet:

"...Obey God and obey the Messenger..." (*Al-Nisa*, 4:59)

It is as if, the Quran is the text, and the Hadith the commentary; the Quran being the theory and the Hadith being the practice. Thus the Quran and

Hadith cannot be separated from one another. They are complementary to each other. Both are equally essential for the establishment of religion.

During the life of the Prophet there were no regular compilations of the traditions, for they were not generally recorded in writing. However, they were orally transmitted, with great accuracy of detail, thanks to the Arab's exceptionally retentive memories. Later they were compiled into books by various collectors of Hadith.

Tazkiya

Since spiritual development is to do with the mind, spiritual progress is just another name for intellectual progress or intellectual development, which is the main target of man. The process of spiritual or intellectual development in fact begins with the de-conditioning of the conditioned mind or the purification of the mind—*Tazkiya*, as mentioned in the Quran. The more one de-conditions the mind, the more one will gain in spiritual or intellectual development. Spiritual or Intellectual progress is just not possible without taking such a step.

Spirituality, in its awakening of the mind, provides the best formula for *tazkiya*—the purification, or de-

conditioning, that leads to our personality development. It is a great strength at all times. Spirituality, in effect, is a promoter of all good and a killer of all evils. Everyone may be born spiritual, that is, one may be spiritual by nature, but, after birth, one lives in a society, which, with its multiple influences, conditions or shapes man's personality in such a way that it is flawed by negative feelings. These negative feelings can be of anger, revenge, jealousy, hatred and rivalry. Due to these negative influences, we develop a negative personality. We, therefore, have to consciously activate our minds and de-condition or purify them so as to develop our personality on positive lines, as only a positive personality will gain entry into paradise.

To attain the state of *tazkiya*, a man has to re-engineer his mind. Man must become disciplined and not allow his personality to develop under the influence of external incentives. He should, by his own decisions, construct his personality on the basis of higher principles. Only then will he be of a divine character. He has to shake and jolt and remould his personality to abide by the plan of his Creator. He has to turn himself into the kind of person who is shaped not by society, but by spirituality and is thus able to live a God-oriented or *Rabbani* life.

According to a Hadith, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ

said that the highest form of worship was to pray as if you were seeing God. We learn from this Hadith the true sign of a superior form of worship. The true sign for man is to sense the presence of God during worship, and feel that he has come close to God. That is when he can experience the refreshing, cooling effect of God's love and blessings for man. It is this feeling of closeness to God which is the highest form of spiritual experience.

The Sajdah is the highest form of meditation. Sajdah is a form of unification of soul and body. Sajdah is the meeting point between God and man.

Sajdah is the sign of submission or surrender, for it is only in a state of submission or surrender that we can meet God Almighty. *Sajdah* is the final position of submission for acquiring a place very close to God.

Prayers of the Prophet

O God, I beg You for guidance, piety, purity and freedom from want.

O God, forgive me, have mercy on me, bless me with safety and tranquility, and give provision to me.

O God, You have full control over our hearts. Turn our hearts towards Your obedience.

God is sufficient for us. He is the best guardian. An excellent master and excellent helper.

O God, I seek Your protection and refuge from the mischief of the things I have done and from the mischief of the things I have not done.

O God, I seek Your protection from Your blessings being snatched away from me.

O God, I ask for your refuge from the trial and torment of fire.

O God, protect me from the forbidden by granting me permissible things. Make me independent of any other by Your grace.

O God, I seek Your protection from enmity, hypocrisy and bad behaviour.

O God, I seek Your refuge from useless knowledge and a heart without fear.

O God, set right my world which has provisions for my life.

O God, make my body healthy, make my hearing healthy and make my eyesight healthy. There is no deity but You.

O God, keep me alive so long as life is better for me, but take my life if death is better for me.

O God, set right my hereafter where I have to return.

O God, it is Your mercy I am seeking. So let me not give in to myself for the span of an eye's wink. Make good all my affairs. There is no deity but You.

O God, I beg You to make me do good things, shun reprehensible things, and love the helpless.

Sayings of the Prophet

If someone shows no compassion to people,
God will show no compassion to him.
Muslim

If you shake hands with each other,
dislike will disappear,
and if you give gifts to each other,
malice will disappear.
Muwatta

Earning an honest living is a duty next in importance to the principal duty of *iman*.
Baihaqi

Give the worker his wages
before his sweat dries.
Ibn Majah

Allah does not have mercy on
one who is not merciful to others.
Bukhari and Muslim

Every man is a mirror to his brother.
Muslim

If Allah wants to do good to somebody,
He afflicts him with trials.
Bukhari

No one of you should judge between
two persons when he is angry.
Muslim

He who does not thank people
does not thank Allah.
Tirmidhi

He is not a believer who has a square meal
while his neighbour starves.
Ibn Majah

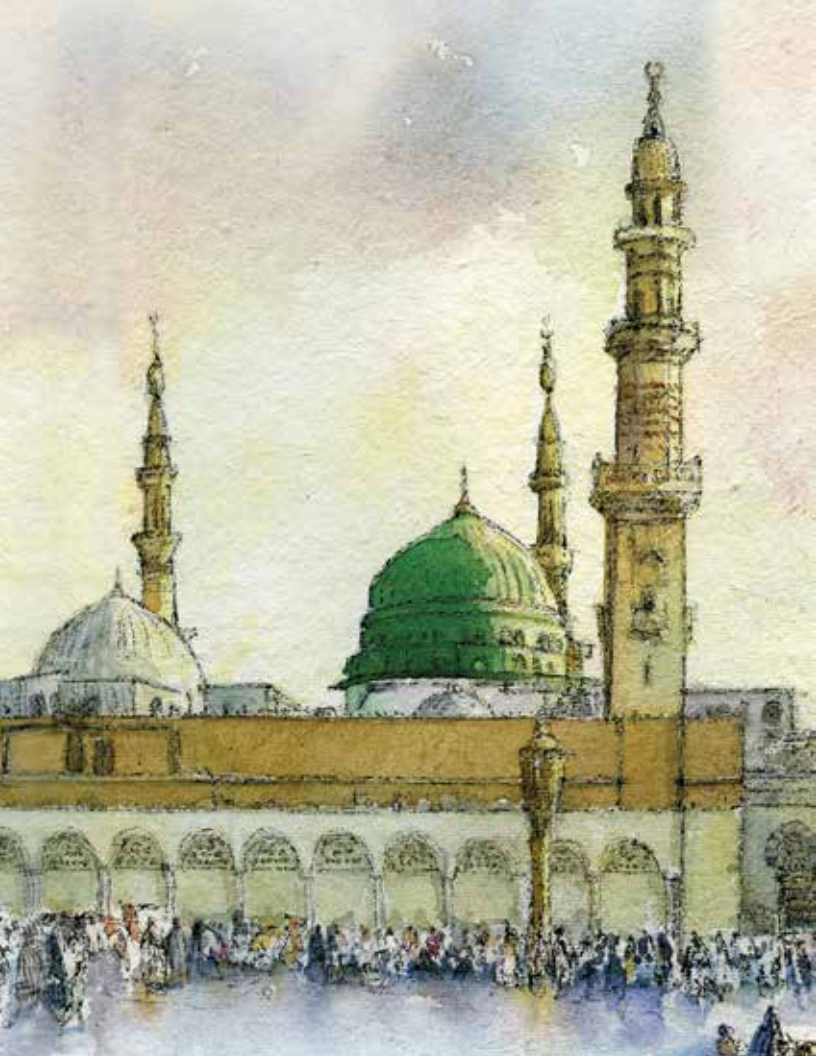
Learn that success goes with patience.
Ahmad

God grants to peace what He does not grant to
violence.
Muslim

Save yourselves from envy.
For envy eats up virtue as fire eats up wood.
Abu Dawud

A true believer believes in
the essential goodness of others.
Ahmad

God loves His self-respecting servants who, while
poor, avoid begging from others.
Ibn Majah



The Rightly Guided Caliphs

Abu Bakr Siddiq

Abu Bakr was the first man outside the Prophet's family to accept Islam. A kind and generous man, and a wealthy merchant, he persuaded many of his friends to accept Islam. The Prophet once said, 'No one has been a better companion to me than Abu Bakr.'

He migrated to Madinah along with the Prophet and was called, 'Second of the Two'. His daughter 'A'ishah was married to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. On the occasion of the Tabuk expedition he contributed all his wealth to the cause of Islam. The Prophet toward the end of his life, asked Abu Bakr to lead the prayers – the highest

honour in Islam.

He was chosen as the first Caliph after the death of the Prophet. It was a critical time, for many tribes whose faith was not yet strong were rebelling to the point of leaving Islam. Abu Bakr successfully handled the situation. The following is his first address on becoming the Caliph:

"I have been given the authority over you, and I am not the best of you. If I do well, help me; and if I do wrong, set me right. Sincere regard for truth is loyalty and disregard for truth is treachery. ... Obey me so long as I obey God and His Messenger. But if I disobey God and His Messenger, you owe me no obedience."

The Prophet once said, 'No one has been a better companion to me than Abu Bakr.'

He died a little more than two years after the death of the Prophet and was buried by his side.

Umar Farooq

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ gave Umar the title of "Al Farooq", which means, "The one who distinguishes between right and wrong."

Umar was a man of strong conviction; and would become furious when anyone accepted Islam. Once he even set out, sword in hand, to kill the Prophet. But he had a change of heart and accepted Islam. The Prophet had prayed to God to make Islam strong with the conversion of Umar. At the time of the Prophet's demise, the Ansar and the Prophet's clan (Banu Hashim) both wanted the next Caliph to be from amongst them. It was a very delicate situation. But Umar defused it by taking Abu Bakr by the hand and swearing allegiance (*bait*) to him. The rest of the Muslims followed.

The Prophet once said that "Satan does not use the paths that Umar walks on."

Umar was subsequently nominated by Abu Bakr to succeed him as the Caliph.

He was a skilled administrator and deeply concerned about the welfare of his people. During his Caliphate Egypt, Iraq, Palestine, Iran and Syria came under Islamic rule. In spite of this, he lived simply, wearing clothes which would have many patches.

He was the Caliph for over ten years. After his death he was buried by the side of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

Here are some of his sayings:

"To speak less is wisdom, to eat less is health and to sleep less is worship."

"After faith (*Iman*) the best blessing is to have a good wife."

Uthman ibn Affan

During the Caliphate of Uthman ibn Affan, Islam spread to distant lands. One great contributing factor was his final compilation and dissemination of the Quran. Prior to this, a final copy of the Quran had been compiled by Abu Bakr, but since differences had been noted in the recitation of the Quran in different region, had had this copy of the Quran double checked and then organized the distribution of final copies.

He was a very religious man and received glad tidings of Paradise from the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. He performed two *Hijrahs* for the sake of Islam – one to Abyssinia and the other to Madinah. He was one of the closest companions of the Prophet and was married successively to two of his daughters.

His Caliphate brought economic prosperity but some Muslims were unhappy with him. The feeling of dissension peaked and he was martyred by rebels among the Muslims.

He said that four things were useless: "Knowledge without practice, wealth without expenditure in the way of God, piety for the sake of show and a long life with no stock of good deeds."

He loved three things: to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to read and teach the Quran.

Ali ibn Abi Talib

Ali ibn Abi Talib, the Prophet Muhammad's cousin and the son of Abu Talib, was brought up under the guardianship of the Prophet. He was a pious man, renowned for his bravery. He was among the first to accept Islam even though he was still a child. When the Prophet left for the *Hijrah* to Madinah, he made Ali lie

in his bed, so that the Quraysh soldiers waiting outside would not know that the Prophet had left.

He was chosen as the Caliph after Uthman ibn Affan. It was a time of great upheaval. The rebels who had killed Uthman were in control of Madinah. Ali tried his best to control the situation and even shifted his base to Kufa in Iraq to consolidate his Caliphate. He had to face intense opposition, particularly from Muawiya, the governor of Syria. The Muslims opposing Ali wanted him to immediately punish the murderers of Uthman. But this was very difficult under the circumstances. He was ultimately martyred by the Kharjis (dissenters).

Here are some of his sayings:

"I am the slave of him who has taught me even one letter".

"Live amongst people in such a manner that if you die they weep over you and if you are alive they crave your company."

"Man is a wonderful creature; he sees through the layers of fat (eyes), hears through a bone (ears) and speaks through a lump of flesh (tongue)."

سورة فاتحة الكتاب
بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
الحمد لله رب العالمين الرحمن
الرحيم مالك يوم الدين اياك نعبد و
اياك نستعين اهدنا الصراط المستقيم صراط الذين
انعمت عليهم غير المغضوب عليهم ولا
الضالين
انه لقرآن كريم في كتاب مكنون

Dawah – The Continuation of the Prophet's Mission

Dawah work has been termed in the Quran 'the call to God.' In other words, dawah work aims at bringing people closer to their Creator and Sustainer. Calling people to God is telling them that the only right way of life for them on this earth is to become true believers in God.

Calling people to God means warning man of the evil consequences of the self-oriented life, and therefore, inviting him to adopt the God-oriented life. The most authentic and reliable source of knowledge of the divine teachings on both types of life has been preserved for us in the form of the Quran. Calling people to God is purely other-worldly in nature. That is, it is in no way associated with national, social or economic issues. It is a campaign designed to bring people nearer to God. It starts in the spiritual and religious idiom and goes on in the same idiom and style till the end.

"I am the slave of him who has taught me even one letter".

The purpose of dawah work or 'calling people to God' is to awaken souls from their slumber. It is to put a lost person on to the right path leading towards God. It is to awaken a man's insight so that he begins to see glimpses of God in the signs of the vast universe. It is to unveil the Creator in the mirror of His creation.

It is very important that this work should be done politely, taking care to maintain a cordial atmosphere. The policy of avoidance and patience is vital in this matter. This work is vital to supporting the divine mission. No effort should be spared in furthering God's cause.

A *da'i* (caller to God) should remember that his responsibility is limited to presenting the message and inviting people. God will guide whom he wills to the right path.

We have to remember that we are the followers of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ who had been sent as a warner to all mankind. We have to ensure that this responsibility is discharged in the present times.

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan is an Islamic spiritual scholar who has adopted peace as the mission of his life. Known for his peace-oriented views, he considers non-violence as the only method to achieve success. Keeping this ideal consistently before him, he has written over 200 books on Islam and a commentary on the Quran. His most recent publication is *The Prophet of Peace: The Teachings of the Prophet Muhammad* (Penguin Books). Internationally recognized for his contributions to world peace, he has received, among others, the Demiurgus Peace International Award, the Padma Bhushan, and the Rajiv Gandhi National Sadbhavna Award.

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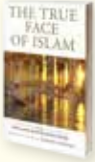

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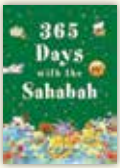

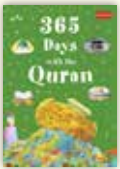

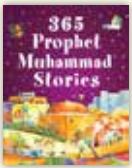

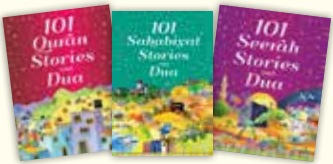

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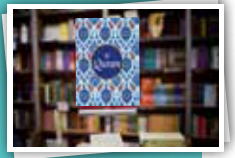

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